WORLD CHRONICLE

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PROGRAMME: "WORLD CHRONICLE"

GUEST: Sir Crispin Tickell
United Kingdom Ambassador to
United Nations

JOURNALISTS: Paul Lewis, The New York Times
Evgueni Menkes, TASS
Leonard Doyle, The Independent, London

MODERATOR: Michael Littlejohns

SYNOPSIS

The U.N.'s role in resolving global problems

Sir Crispin Tickell, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the United Nations, discusses issues ranging from the Mideast to the Cambodia conflict resolution and global climatic change. Ambassador Tickell believes that the United Nations is going to be increasingly important in resolving regional conflicts and problems of a global nature, such as drug abuse, the environment and AIDS.

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Executive Producer: Yuanchi Chen
Director: Livingston Hinckley
Production Assistant: Diane Barkley

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VOICE From United Nations Headquarters in New York, this is World Chronicle, an unedited interview programme about major global issues. Here now to introduce our guest is the host of today's World Chronicle.

LITTLEJOHNS: I'm Michael Littlejohns and this is WORLD CHRONICLE.

In this edition, we'll talk about the newly revitalized United Nations with an accomplished diplomat.

Sir Crispin Tickell, the Permament Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations since 1987, has played a major role in facilitating negotiations, in particular, among the five permanent members of the Security Council. His efforts have been instrumental in obtaining the adoption of significant resolutions and agreements, in helping restore peace in several areas, and settling long-standing international disputes.

The renewed co-operative spirit displayed by the five major powers is a welcome development at the United Nations. Does this new spirit represent a new lease of life for the Organization? Will it make the U.N. better able to meet its responsibilities for international peace and security?

To discuss this and other questions about the United Nations, we are pleased to have Ambassador Tickell as our guest today. He'll be interviewed here at United Nations Headquarters in New York by: Paul Lewis of The New York Times; Evgueni Menkes of TASS; and Leonard Doyle of The Independent of London.

Amb. Tickell, welcome to WORLD CHRONICLE.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Ambassador, you have been here at the United Nations during a rather extraordinary period in post-World War II history. The Security Council has passed from a long period of confrontation to one of greater accommodation among the major powers -- the five permanent members of the Security Council -- do you think that this augurs well for a more important role for the Security Council, a more useful role for the Security Council in the settlement of international disputes, bearing in mind that it was very much hamstrung over the years by the tensions of the cold war?

TICKELL: We had a long period in which the Security Council could not really do its job and it mirrored the many conflicts in other aspects of world affairs. The Security Council can only work if the important members of it are ready to make it work and I think that I was very fortunate because shortly after my arrival in New York came the great changes which have permitted full co-operation between the three Western members of the Security Council -- the United States, Britain and France -- and the Soviet Union and China, and since I've been here in 1987 we've seen a remarkable co-operation develop between those five countries who, as you know, have special responsibilities under the Charter for maintaining international peace and security. I think perhaps our most conspicuous early work was on trying to bring to an end the Iran/Iraq war, we then had a substantial role to play over the peace settlement in Namibia and the sending of that United Nations Force which allowed Namibia to come to independence to everyone's great pleasure only a few months ago. We've now been at work on a whole range of other issues and I expect that that tendency will continue to develop.

LITTLEJOHNS: Amb. Tickell, unfortunately the Middle East situation seems to be eluding all efforts at a solution, do you feel that there's something more that the Security Council might be able to do in this area?

TICKELL: Well, my government has long felt that the Security Council has a major responsibility in this affair and that the five permanent members likewise have a major responsibility. It's for that reason that we have asked for an international conference, we've asked for consultations among the five permanent members and we look forward to a United Nations mediated settlement in the long run. The Middle East and the problems between Israel and her Arab neighbours and the Palestinians have been one of the most sad and long-running of disputes since the very first days of Israel's creation and we are now in many respects still at it, but I hope that it will become the last of the major regional problems which the five permanent members and the Security Council and ultimately the rest of the world will settle.

LITTLEJOHNS: You've mentioned the high degree of co-operation among the three Western permanent members of the Security Council, in fact the United States has been the sort of odd one out on the Middle East question having cast a veto when France and the U.K. have voted for resolutions?

TICKELL: I agree but that was on the specific question of whether to send a mission from the Security Council to the Occupied Territories or not but you are of course right that the United States has a particular position which is not shared by all other members of the Council, but rather than underline the differences, at the moment we're all trying to build bridges and make it possible for the Security Council to act more effectively and at the time in which we are speaking,

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which is the beginning of June, we're all making yet another effort to see if we can lead the peace process forward in the direction in which the Israeli Government itself suggested and which the United States has encouraged through its proposals for elections and the rest.

LEWIS: You are the current president of the five permanent members of the Security Council and you're also engaged in talks now trying to hammer out a peace solution for the Cambodian civil war, I wonder if you could tell us what the prospects are?

TICKELL: I think I rather prefer to describe myself not as chairman but as co-ordinator of the five permament members, it means that I arrange the meetings and do the agenda. On Cambodia, the Five have moved into that very dangerous area in the hope that we too could produce the elections, the settlement and the end of the painful and persisting civil war. I think we do so conscious of our responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security worldwide but also conscious of the efforts being made by countries in the region to try and do something in that area, but as we all know all too well, that current efforts or recent efforts have not been successful and the Five have been moving forward and working out ideas about how the United Nations might move into that country and supervise elections and lead to a genuine international settlement. And the Five have held a series of meetings, the fourth of which took place in New York only a few days ago, in which we are trying to refine the options and set out the possibilities for the others. The process, if I could just add, is immensely difficult and it can't be done by the Five alone. There have been efforts by the four factions as you know to meet and to discuss matters between them but the next meeting of the Five is going to take place in

Paris in July to which we have invited the four factions to come and so that really is the next most important event in the calendar. But there the Five, as in other areas, are trying to exert a measure of leadership in coping with a problem which many people have found too hot to handle.

MENKES: Ambassador, how many times did you have to use your right of veto in the Council, if at all?

TICKELL: I try not to remember how many times I cast a veto but all I can say is I think it's about three since I've been here. It's not something that we will do with great pleasure. The veto power, in many ways, is much misrepresented. The veto power was used by one or other of the permanent members in the past in large numbers but the veto power in a way makes the Security Council a serious organization because without the veto power, it would be all too easy for majorities on this issue or that to pass resolutions which had no effect, whereas if the Security Council passes a resolution, and if the permament members do not veto it, it means that it has a moral force in world affairs which mere majorities in the General Assembly or in other organizations would not have. And so although the veto power is in many respects an unwelcome aspect to the Security Council's business it's the one in my judgement which makes it the serious organization that it is. If I could just add one point on the veto power, it is I think that recently, because of the co-operation which has developed between the five permanent members, they have moved from the veto power, from the negative point to the positive point of uniting together to try and achieve something and that has been very evident in the case of Namibia and I hope it's going to be evident, as Paul Lewis has just reminded us, in the case of Cambodia.

DOYLE: If we could continue on the theme of the five permanent members and the Security Council veto, is there still a valid case to be made for the two smaller Western countries -- Britain and France -- being permament members of the United Nations and keeping their veto when we have other countries quickly industrializing around the world who are probably looking quite jealously at this seat?

TICKELL: I sometimes hear about the jealousy of the permament membership of the Security Council although I don't come across it very much personally. I think that being a permament member is of course something which goes back to the early days of the Charter, the post-War period, and neither Britain nor France have the worldwide power and influence which they then enjoyed but, I think it's fair to say that Britain and France are both countries with worldwide responsibilities, their languages are the world languages, they have a habit of dealing with world affairs and I think that the three other permament members of the Security Council frequently value them as partners in Security Council business because we do no represent the big battalions in the way that the Soviet Union and China and the United States do. So we're rather useful but as for the other countries who would like to be permament members, it's very difficult because to change the Charter would require a major effort and to fix criteria by which countries could or could not be permament members would be fiendishly difficult because economic power comes and goes. Are you going to measure it in terms of square miles or gross national product or political power and influence or military power? I don't quite know what measuring rod you would use and so I think that most people feel that provided the system works, although things have changed since the Charter laid down the present five permament members, it's better to carry on as we are, but of course nothing

is forever in this world but I personally foresee that the present arrangement is going to last a long time simply because of its sheer usefulness.

LITTLEJOHNS: Sir Crispin, you are a distinguished climatologist and it's been suggested that perhaps you had a hand in the greening of Prime Minister Thatcher, do you think that the Security Council perhaps has a role in the area of the environment?

TICKELL: I think we must be very careful about the roles of the different United Nations bodies when we deal with what is relatively the new agenda which is, in a nutshell, the drugs question, the AIDS question, the environment question in its many aspects. Each of these subjects needs to be dealt with by the United Nations because it's the only global body which exists. I believe that the requirements that are going to be placed on the United Nations to develop international responses to these problems will mean the adaptation of existing institutions and maybe the evolution of new ones. Now, in such a complex I think that I must go back and say that the first requirement we need on climate is agreement on a climatic convention which would set out the rules of good climatic behaviour and deal with the problems of the gases which are at present changing the atmosphere in the same way that we dealt with the problems created by chlorofluorocarbons which are making the holes in the ozone layer and which we all know about. The ozone problem was substantially dealt with by the Vienna Convention of 1985 and then the Montreal Protocol of 1987 where an international structure was put on how to deal with the problem but when we come to climate the first thing is to get down to the fundamentals which is to conclude a climate convention. Now, that I believe will probably happen, and I hope it will happen, following the Second World Climate

Conference this fall and the World Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in 1992. What institution should we use? Well, if you look at all the existing institutions, you've got the General Assembly which provides a kind of moral focus and has already passed extremely useful resolutions on the subject of climate change, you've got the International Court of Justice which can certainly be used for adjudicating disputes between States arising from environmental questions, you've got the Specialized Agencies including the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and others whose work touches on environmental and climatic issues -- you've got all of that -- and then you come to the Security Council and there I see the Security Council role fundamentally arising from its primary responsibility which is the maintenance of international peace and security because I foresee, although I don't like foreseeing, that environmental problems are going to cause increasing disputes between States in the next century over such basic questions as food and productive land and water supplies if, as we fear, major changes take place in the environment and in that event the Security Council would be the kind of place where we would try to settle some of these disputes before they turn into open war or conflict.

LITTLEJOHNS: The programme is **WORLD CHRONICLE.** Our guest is Sir Crispin Tickell, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the United Nations.

LEWIS: I wanted to ask you what you thought the realistic prospects were for some kind of an international agreement, convention, on greeenhouse gases because it seems that as political tensions between East and West fade we do see increased tension between the North and the South, between the developed and the developing countries and on these environmental questions the developing countries are demanding

various types of assistance and aid, bribes if you like, from the North as their price for co-operating on environmental questions, so do you think it's going to be possible to get a global agreement?

TICKELL: I believe that it's going to be not only possible to get a global agreement but it's going to be essential to get a global agreement but let me say first that no agreement is worth anything unless everyone participates in it. It is true that the industrial countries have, by virtue of industrialization and of course unwittingly, created some of the problems which we're now having to cope with and I think the first thing that has to happen is that the industrial countries who have made most of the mess have got to be the first to give leadership in clearing it up and so the present argument that is going on about what industrial countries should do is, in a sense, a measure of the responsibility, the particular responsibility that they have and that they must do something about soon. So the way I see it is this, first the science has to be fully established. Nobody is going to do anything until the science is pretty clear and as it happens the beginning of June has seen the publication of the report of a group set up from about 200 scientists worldwide called the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. That group has now published its first report and that is a very interesting report, it shows that there is a major danger of global warming which could affect all countries of the world, albeit in different ways. So you have the science beginning. You then move on to the politics. There, as I repeat, the industrial countries must show leadership and must do something, above all themselves, to reduce the emissions of chemicals which are damaging the atmosphere. You then come to the problems of the rest of the world. I never accept this North/South division because I don't think it means very much, nor do I really accept the difference

between developed and developing countries. We're all countries at different stages of economic growth, we all have economies of different kinds and our problems are all distinct. When you break down the issue you find that each country has got a particular problem but one of the most important elements which will guide people to join in global arrangements is that each economy is uniquely vulnerable to change. If you take the case of some of the poorer countries of the world who want to advance their industrialization, you will find that they too are very vulnerable to climate change so it's not just a question of the industrial countries wanting to bribe countries not to do things that they otherwise want to do, it is other countries identifying their national interests in an international agreement. For example, the countries of India, South East Asia and parts of China are very vulnerable to the regularity of the monsoon. If the monsoon doesn't arrive at the right time or if the monsoon arrives and spreads rain too copiously those countries undergo major economic disruption. Now, if you look at the populations concerned, China is well over a billion human beings, India is well over 800 million human beings, the slightest change in the existing climatic arrangements would undoubtedly affect those countries very adversely and so we have to combine leadership by the industrial countries, readiness by the industrial countries to help others, help solve the problems, but above all identification by the others of their own primary important interests in global arrangements.

MENKES: Sir Crispin, you spent many years working in a number of European countries, now there are important processes going on there, many changes, how does it show in the United Nations?

TICKELL: So far there's been a kind of pact I think, unspoken, unwritten or anything else, by which European problems have not come to the United Nations and that I think goes back to the days of the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. In the future I don't know how much the problems of Eastern Europe or Western Europe will come to the United Nations. I doubt it if they will very much because they all have other arrangements at the moment for settling disputes between them but I think that for all of us the United Nations is going to be increasingly important because it's no longer going to be possible to deal with problems regionally. A lot of problems have got to be dealt with globally. I mentioned the new agenda of the environment and drugs and AIDS, those are problems that need global treatment but where problems do need or can be dealt with regionally then I think people will deal with them regionally because it's much easier to deal with them regionally. In the case of the changes that we've been seeing recently in Eastern Europe you've seen already the response of the West Europeans, with the Americans and the Canadians and the Japanese, and the creation of this new bank which is designed to help the East European economies get back on their feet so I foresee increasing co-operation between Eastern and Western Europe and I foresee perhaps more regional solutions being found where they can be found but the problems that have global character must continue to come to New York and I expect that they will do just that.

DOYLE: Sir Crispin, you've mapped out sometimes rather a frightening prospect of climatic change which could affect world peace and it's clear that with the changes in Europe the world is getting more complex and perhaps with the former superpower arrangements receding there is a new role for the Security Council to play here and I'm just wondering, since you believe that the existing structure should remain how would

you like to see the effectiveness of the Security Council improved? Are there any particular ideas you have for the forthcoming decades?

TICKELL: The Security Council is an evolving institution and it responds to the demands made upon it. I think that the key element for the Security Council is that it should concern itself with peace and security and there are things that flow from peace and security. It was I in fact who tried at one stage last year to introduce the drugs issue more vigorously into the Security Council but I didn't succeed because other countries preferred it to go to the General Assembly and I gladly agreed that that should be the case and we did discuss it in the General Assembly, we had a Special Session devoted to it, but I still think that the drugs issue do raise problems of international peace and security and I expect that the Security Council will have take heed of those in the future more than it has done in the past. In the structure of international arrangements the Security Council has got a role but I think we must recognize it's a limited role. I think if you want to look ahead to something else I would say this. If we have a climatic convention and suppose we have arrangements to limit the production of certain chemicals which are damaging the atmosphere and damaging the world and having these bad effects that you rightly describe, then we're going to have a mechanism by which international agreements are monitored and respected and so I foresee that out of the climatic convention will grow perhaps something rather like the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade by which environmental issues will be dealt with in a body which will set the standards, will have disputes mechanisms and try to settle the issues which are bound to arise and bound to cause a lot of problems between the different countries of the world and so I hope that will be a United Nations institution. The General Agreement on Tariffs and

Trade, although it it is a global organization, doesn't actually come under the umbrella of the United Nations but I'm sure that if we can negotiate a climate convention in the future, whatever grows out of it, must be a United Nations arrangement to fit in with all the other things that have been done in the Specialized Agencies and elsewhere.

LITTLEJOHNS: Sir Crispin, I'd like to ask you an in-house question relating to the Secretariat. The British colony of Hong Kong is going to become part of China in July 1997, there are in the United Nations a number of Secretariat employees who have Hong Kong passports issued by the British authorities, after 1997 are these employees going to become British or Chinese?

TICKELL: In the House of Commons it is always said when someone asks an absolutely impossible question, I require notice of that and I certainly require notice of that question.

LEWIS: I was going to go back to political matters. It seems to me that the U.N. spends all of its time reacting to crises and wars after they have broken out, should it not perhaps, if we're talking about the 1990s, look more at preventative diplomacy, at trying to stop things going wrong before they go wrong?

TICKELL: I very much applaud the idea of preventative diplomacy but it's very difficult to do. The best way preventative diplomacy is done is by the Secretary-General playing that quiet and effective role that he does behind the scenes, because if you start advertising United Nations involvement in a problem before it becomes explosive it can often have the effective of putting a match to the explosives and therefore what I particularly applaud, and this leads me on

in dealing with your question, what I think we should do is to give the Secretary-General greater power or authority perhaps than he's had for managing that backstairs in the discreet diplomacy for which he is absolutely the acknowledged master and I'd like to see that much more built into our institutions.

MENKES: The other day I read an article in the New York Review by Brian Urquhart, who was for many years Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the gist of what he wrote there was that the United Nations of today is a far cry from the U.N. what was the idea of the founding fathers of it. What is your attitude towards this?

TICKELL: Well my attitude is very simply this, that the United Nations is not something which is regulated too much by texts it is a growing institution which evolves in response to circumstances and sometimes it grows to cope with circumstances which haven't even arisen and so the difference between something which is caught in the toils of a constitution and something which is living is the difference between the United Nations of today and the United Nations of 1944-45.

LITTLEJOHNS: And you're optimistic about the future of the United Nations, Sir Crispin?

TICKELL: I believe it to be a necessary part of international life and so it is to that extent an inevitable part of international life, so I look forward to its growth and development in the future.

LITTLEJOHNS: I'm sure we all wish you well in your future career after your departure from the United Nations.

Amb. Tickell, that's all the time we have on this programme. Thank you for joining us on this edition of **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

Our guest has been Sir Crispin Tickell, the United Kingdom's Ambassador to the United Nations. He was interviewed here at United Nations Headquarters in New York by: Paul Lewis of The New York Times; Evgueni Menkes of TASS, the Soviet News Agency; and Leonard Doyle of The Independent of London.

I'm Michael Littlejohns. Thank you for joining us. We invite you to be with us for the next edition of **WORLD CHRONICLE**.

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